

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to city attorneys John A. Misci, Jr., of Camden, NJ, Manuela Albuquerque of Berkley, CA, and Dee Joyce-Hayes of St. Louis, MO; King Fahd Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; and President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria.

**Teleconference Remarks With  
Mayors on the Gun Safety  
Agreement With Smith & Wesson**  
*March 17, 2000*

**The President.** Hello.

**Participant.** Hello, Mr. President.

**Participant.** Hello, Mr. President.

**The President.** Thank you all for joining us. I'd like to start by asking everyone here on the phone to say their names and the city and the State they represent.

We have with us here in the Oval Office, Attorney General Spitzer of New York, Attorney General Blumenthal of Connecticut, Mayor Penelas of Miami, and Mayor Bill Campbell of Atlanta was here; he just walked out. So we're all here. But why don't we—everybody else who is on the phone say something about it, who you are?

*[At this point, the teleconference participants introduced themselves.]*

**The President.** We're delighted to have you on the phone call, and I want to say on behalf of not only the White House but Attorney General Reno and Deputy Attorney General Holder, Secretary Summers, and Deputy Secretary Eizenstat and Secretary Cuomo, we very much appreciate what you've done, and we congratulate you. I think that this agreement will fundamentally change the way the gun industry does business, and all of you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your leadership and involvement have helped to make all American communities safer. We couldn't be here without you, and I thank you.

Now, we've got to build on what we've accomplished today and continue to reduce gun violence. The long roster of leaders with us here today is proof that the whole Nation supports what we're doing, and we just need you to go out there and keep working with responsible mentors of the gun industry to

keep this momentum going. And I hope we can get some other manufacturers to join us.

I wonder if anybody who is here wants to say anything and anybody on the phone would like to say anything now.

*[At this point, participants in the teleconference made brief remarks.]*

**The President.** Thank you very much. If I could just echo two of the points that were made. First of all, I agree with the last point Mayor Penelas made. This proves, this agreement, that nobody was in it for the money. Everybody said all along, the States, the municipalities, and the Federal Government, nobody wanted any money damages; we just wanted a change in the way America lives to make it a safer place.

The second thing I'd like to say, to echo what Mayor Archer and Attorney General Spitzer said is, Smith & Wesson stuck their neck out here, and I think that all of us, including the Federal Government, in our procurement policies, if we really are serious about making America safer, ought to send a clear signal that we appreciate what they did. I think that that will accelerate the day in which the other manufacturers will follow suit.

I thank you all very much. This is a happy day, and I'm glad to talk to you all, and thanks for joining the phone call, and thanks for agreeing with the settlement.

Thank you all. Goodbye.

NOTE: The teleconference began at 2:37 p.m. The President spoke from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Alexander Penelas of Metro-Dade, FL; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; Eliot Spitzer, attorney general, New York State; and Richard Blumenthal, attorney general, State of Connecticut. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the participating city officials.

**Message on the Observance of Saint  
Patrick's Day, 2000**

*March 17, 2000*

Warm greetings to everyone observing Saint Patrick's Day.